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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/04/2020
TAGS: PGOV PREL PTER IZ
SUBJECT: PM MALIKI SALTING INTEL AGENCIES WITH DAWA
LOYALISTS

REF: A. TD-314/004784-10
    ¶B. TD-314/006162-10
    ¶C. BAGHDAD 290

Classified By: Acting DCM Gary A Grappo for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (S/NF) SUMMARY AND COMMENT. In recent weeks, the Prime
Minister's office has directed the removal of Ministry of
Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) intelligence
officers due to alleged links to the Ba'ath party or the
former regime. In at least one case, these PM lists have
coincided with the placement of Da'wa party "political
officers" who lack intelligence or related backgrounds.
Iraqis across the political spectrum, including directly from
former PM Ayad Allawi, accuse Maliki of positioning his own
people within the intelligence agencies to eliminate internal
opposition in the run-up to the elections. With the
hyper-sensitivity to any perceived power plays in the current
political climate, these moves are seen as troubling by both
U.S. and Iraqi observers. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

¶2. (S/NF) Prime Minister Maliki's office recently attempted a
purge of 36 intelligence officers from the Iraqi Joint
Headquarters Intelligence Directorate (M2) in accordance with
the Justice and Accountability law. According to M2 Director
SMG Ala,a Salman Jasim ((al-Amiri)), the purge coincided
with the recent placement of 47 Da'wa party "political
officers" within the M2 by the Prime Minister's Office. The
M2 Director managed to reduce the original list of 36 to 22
and stated their loss will not significantly impact
operations. The original purge list contained some of the
most experienced intelligence officers in the M2, including
the Analytic Branch Chief BG ((Basil)) Majid Nasir Hassien
al-Aamari, considered the most influential advisor to the M2.
 The list appeared to target intelligence officers who had
worked in the former regime and could easily be labeled
"Ba'athists." (Note: While the majority were Sunni, there
were also Shi'a officers on the list. End Note). The list
caused considerable consternation within the M2, and SMG
al-Amiri had said in private conversations with USG contacts
and fellow officers that he would resign if BG Basil were
forced to leave. On 18 January, USF-I learned that SMG
al-Amiri had met with MinDef Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji and had
managed to reduce the list to 18 identified and 4 unnamed
officers. SMG al-Amiri succeeded in removing the most
important officers, including BG Basil. (Note: Of the 22, at
least 8 were labeled "irreconcilable Ba'athists" by the PM's
office and M2 was forced to remove them. End Note.)

¶3. (S/NF) Of the 47 new "political officers", all are Shi'a,
and many lived in Iran during the previous regime where they
may have received some intelligence training. Qualifications
offered to justify their work in the M2 included a two-month
course (NFI) and education credentials that MG al-Amiri
believes were falsified in many cases. Their contributions
to intelligence work within M2 appear limited thus far. Some
officers in M2 believe the new cadres are an attempt to fill

the M2 with personnel loyal to the Da'wa party, rather than create a more efficient intelligence organization. SMG al-Amiri stated he was satisfied with the current situation, considered it resolved and the loss of the officers on the transfer list would not significantly impact his operations. (Comment: Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) and Sadrist Trend parties have previously accused Maliki of appointing former regime intelligence officers. The current de-Ba'athification mania may be a convenient way to address Qde-Ba'athification mania may be a convenient way to address these accusations as well as to provide cover to place Da'wa loyalists in their positions. End Comment.)

¶4. (S/NF) The Ministry of Interior's Iraqi National Intelligence and Investigation Agency (NIIA) also received lists from the PM's office of alleged former Iraqi Ba'ath party and intelligence organization members from the Saddam regime who were to be fired from their current positions as part of the GOI's ongoing de-Ba'athification initiative. The NIIA received two lists, totaling 20 officers, to include some of the highest quality personnel. NIIA, according to its leadership, could potentially lose near 140 officers over a series of future discussed lists/de-Ba'athification cuts. Those fired would continue to receive salaries until another job or compensation was decided (ref A). (Comment: U.S. law enforcement expressed concern that compensation would not meet cost of living and may turn to illegal anti-government activities. End Comment.) NIIA officers were also concerned that the lists would be made public, placing the officers involved at great personal risk. In addition to the various lists, USF-I partners who work with NIIA are concerned about the transfer of MG Hassan ((Co'Kass)) from his position in the PM-controlled Office of the Commander in Chief (OCINC) to become the NIIA Deputy Director. There is some suggestion

that Co'Kass may eventually replace current NIIA head DM Hussain Ali ((Kamal)) should he be forced out as part of any political fallout in the MOI between Interior Minister Bolani and the PM.

¶5. (S/NF) COMMENT: Electioneering is in full swing throughout the security services, with reports that MinDef Abd al-Qadir is pushing for Maliki's re-election amongst his generals and that MOI personnel are being highly encouraged to support MinInt Bolani's coalition (ref B). In the hyper-sensitive atmosphere surrounding elections, each of these moves by the PM is being looked at with high suspicion across the entire political spectrum. Maliki has also replaced administrative and finance personnel in the Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS), with the possibility of de-Ba'athification lists for INIS personnel looming. Opposition candidates, such as former PM Ayad Allawi are claiming that Maliki is working to eliminate internal opposition to his grip on power, and rhetoric is likely to continue at high pitch (ref C). Not to be lost in the political back and forth is the serious harm to the intelligence institutions by drumming out experienced and proficient officers in certain services in the name of de-Ba'athification, regardless if it a cover for political gamesmanship. USF-I, law enforcement, and U.S. intelligence observers have all raised concerns about these moves by Maliki, and their effect on the institutional strength of those agencies affected. END COMMENT.

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